

```

      // // // // // // // //
      // / // // // // //
      // // // // // // // //
      // / // // // // //
      // // // // // // //

```

```

      // // // // // // // //
      // // // // // // // //
      // // // // // // // //
      // // // // // // // //
      // // // // // // // //

```

#236

```

=====
Volume 5, Number 1           Z*NET ONLINE           January 5, 1990
-----

```

(') 1990 by Rovac Industries, Inc.
 Post Office Box 59
 Middlesex, New Jersey 08846

CompuServe Mail - 71777,2140 Genie Mail - ZMAGAZINE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- THIS WEEK
 - What's happening in week in ZNet!.....Ron Kovacs
- CES PREVIEW
 - What's Atari Doing?.....John Nagy
- STATIC ALERT AT CES
 - Atari vs Nintendo.....Richard Sherwin
- ZNET NEWSWIRE
 - Atari News Update and more!.....
- CORDLESS MOUSE
 - Practical Solutions new mouse reviewed.....John Nagy
- REVOLUTION WEEKLY CALENDER
 - What you might want to do to help.....Donald Thomas
- PUBLIC DOMAIN UPDATE
 - BlitzFix Offered.....
- NEW LIFE FOR YOUR MOUSE
 - Atari Mouse Fix.....Mike Bryant
- LINE NOISE
 - BBS info and tid-bits from the ZNet BBS.....Ron Kovacs
- HARDWARE REVIEW
 - Spectre GCR Revisited.....Kris Cruz
- SHAREWARE SPOTLITE
 - Codehead Software Utilities.....Ken Johnson
- SOFTWARE REVIEW
 - C-Breeze from Michtron.....Sally Nagy

by Ron Kovacs

Were Back!

501

You downloaded ZNET501.ARC. When we released ST*ZMagazine last year at this time, we started with issue #1, when we started ST-Report and the first regular Atari online magazine ZMag, they also started with issue #1 and put our numbering system into chaos! Since we started in 1986 with Volume 1 Number 1, we will start 1990 with Volume 5 Number 1 and ease the issue number problem. This system will also assist everyone with a time stamping of the issue. Examples: #1 is January, #5 is February and #10 from March.

Alice Amore and Mark Quinn are still on vacation and will return next week with the Shareware Survey. Sally Nagy appears with a review of C-Breeze from Michtron.

This week an update about the rumored FCC Modem Tax, a preview of the Winter CES Show and what Atari might be doing, a look at some messages from the ZNET BBS and some NEW features.

Special thanks go to Robert Ford, ZNet SysOp for his assistance during the holidays and John King for supplying us the latest information on the FCC story.

* CES PREVIEW

-----> WHAT IS ATARI DOING?

by John Nagy

Atari will be attending the CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW held this weekend in Las Vegas. Although there may be some surprises, this show is not expected to bring many new announcements from Atari. Remember, Atari likes to make announcements at these major shows, like the introduction of the LYNX at the last CES in Chicago.

A clue to the lower profile expected from Atari this time is the fact that they will NOT appear on the main floor of the CES show. Instead, we are told that Atari will have a suite of its own, preferring to show their products in a more private setting.

CES is traditionally a home and entertainment product show, a place for manufacturers to meet distributors and dealers. The game lines for computers are strong here, although computers have been getting a smaller and smaller portion of CES as the recent years have passed. It was at CES that Atari would show its FUN side, its consumer line. That also has meant the Video Game and 8-bit line.

The likely highlight this time is the "ATARI POWER PACK", a 520STFM bundled with a stack of software at a very attractive price (said to be around \$400 retail). Although the productivity end of the package is not settled yet, it will include Music Studio, Neochrome, Planetarium,

maps and Legends, Star Raiders, Missile Command, Alien Brigade, and F15. Undecided is whether to also include the Timeworks set of Word Writer, Swiftcalc, and Data Manager, to be relicensed as Atari products, or to go with the combination of other applications like First Word Plus, Phasar, and Informer II.

Research was done for Atari by the marketing powerhouse Schiat-Day to determine what a computer buyer really wanted and needed in the way of software. Surprising no one, they found that most want a word processor, a spreadsheet, and a database, plus some games. In the POWER PACK, Atari hopes to meet all the immediate startup needs of the first-time computer buyer, and provide a satisfying base of software to build on. Some sort of tutorial disk or video tape is also to be included to let the new user get started more easily. At or below \$400, this set looks mighty attractive.

You may be asking, "A 520STFM? Why not the STE? Isn't there a similar bundle being sold in Europe that includes the new machine?" Yes, there is. But the STE is apparently still not passed by the FCC for sale in the United States. Although popular in Canada already, the domestic price of the STE alone is expected to be significantly higher than the Power Pack. This gives Atari an opportunity to move the leftover 520's at a price that may make users out of lookers.

The LYNX will certainly be there to help make this CES memorable for Atari. The hand-held color game unit sold out in every store before Christmas, with the last ones in New York said to be selling for \$230... that's more than \$60 ABOVE list price! The demand has been staggering, and the supply has been inadequate. That is expected to change by February, allowing dealers who are freshly impressed with the unit this weekend to have a hope of stocking them before long. In a side note, it has been rumored that SEARS has announced that the LYNX is no longer available. This is not true, it has not been discontinued, just hard to get. Sears' current contract with Atari runs through August, and the LYNX will become more easily available soon. The rumor was started innocently by Sears when they changed the internal part number assigned to the Lynx. Perspective buyers would ask about the old number and told it was no longer available.

Z*NET ONLINE will let you know about what develops in Las Vegas, and if there are any surprise announcements, look for a special bulletin. Remember, NO ONE expected the blockbuster introduction of the LYNX last time.... so who knows for sure?

* STATIC ALERT AT CES

-----> LYNX vs NINTENDO

by Richard Sherwin

Reprinted by permission from the New York Daily News 1/5/90

LAS VEGAS - A musician's strike here may have quieted things down a little on the eve of the giant Winter Consumer Electronics Show, but a marketing fight between Atari Corp. and Nintendo threatens to raise the decibel level at this usually harmonious event.

Ron Stringari, president of Atari's entertainment products division said Atari " is getting back into the marketplace and plans to fight Nintendo

and the other Japanese companies."

The battle for supremacy in the multibillion-dollar video games system market is taking place at the world's biggest trade show. The four-day winter show draws more than 100,000 manufacturers, retailers and industry executives and is designed to showcase what's hot for the consumer as the electronics industry enters its eighth decade.

Nintendo, biggest exhibitor here, is a \$5 billion Tokyo-based video game system company that controls nearly 85% of the market. Sunnyvale, California-based Atari and Sega, also from Japan, share the remaining 15%.

Stringari boasts that Atari intends to knock its Japanese rivals on their heels with its recently available Lynx hand-held color video game system (\$159).

Despite its hefty price tag, Atari expects Lynx to outsell Nintendo's Gameboy monochrome video game system (\$89) by the end of this year.

"We plan to sell more than 1 million units (worldwide) by the end of 1990," Stringari said.

"As one of the last wholly-owned American companies, we've got to show the entire world the type of products we can create, produce and sell," he added.

Nintendo spokesman Richard Linder said he welcomes the competition. "Nintendo intends to sell 5 million Gameboy systems by the end of 1990," he said. "Along with our licensees, we will also sell 20 million software programs for the Gameboy."

Atari spokesman Andrew Marken said the company is backing the ongoing launch of the Lynx with a multibillion-dollar ad campaign. "We spent more than \$1 million in advertising in the New York area alone last month...and the Lynx has already out sold new tabletop video game machines from Sega and NEC," Marken said.

Mark Smotroff, a spokesman for Sega, disputes Atari's sales figures. "We've recorded more than \$100 million in sales in the last five months. We're ahead of Nintendo and Atari," he countered.

Meanwhile, NEC and Sega do not intend to surrender in the video game battle. NEC will be showing off its Turbo Grafix 16 system (\$250-\$350), which it claims has twice the power of the original Nintendo machine.

The Turbo Grafix system also can be purchased with a special CD-player that plays music CDs, CD-graphics discs and special high-tech CD-based video games.

Sega's new Genesis System (\$200) also uses 16-bit technology but doesn't come with all the frills of the NEC machine.

Both NEC and Sega refused to reveal whether they had plans to challenge Atari or Nintendo with portable systems of their own.

-----> ATARI NEWS FIRST!

CSS CLOSES:

Computer Software Services, a major midwest distributor of computer hardware and software of all brands, has apparently ceased business. Phones and FAX numbers are unanswered as some developers and dealers try to figure out what to do next. The Addison, Illinois company had many dealers depending on them alone, offering a wide base of products that prominently included Atari and Amiga. Remaining distributors American and Pacific, Triangle, and Horizon will have to pick up the slack, and hopefully soon.

SLOW CHRISTMAS SEASON:

Software developers have experienced a slow Christmas season according to some observers. Although the Software Publisher's Association announced that overall software sales were up 10% last year, things appeared not to pick up as expected in the fall. However, the software sales are picking up NOW, AFTER Christmas, due to new computer owners selecting software for the hardware they got last month.

PLAYBOY MAGAZINE:

Although it is older news, occurring mid 1989, Playboy Magazine mentioned in a very recent column that "FEDERATED" of California was going to pay 12 MILLION dollars in a settlement to over 8,000 employees and applicants who were forced to take a polygraph test before employment. This is, indeed "our" Atari FEDERATED stores. The lie-detector tests are illegal under California law and Federal rights to privacy, and Atari/Federated will have to pay. However, the wrongdoing was by the former owners of the ill-fated electronics store chain, and so the settlement will be just another part of the ongoing suit by Atari against the former owners. Atari says that the chain's value was seriously overstated in the material supporting the purchase, and that items like this settlement were not disclosed. The former owners of Federated are expected to be quite "collectable" when the suit is finally settled or tried, making the Federated adventure less painful than it might otherwise be.

ATARI MAKES TOP 15 of 1989:

Here is an abridged version of the Top 15 AMEX stocks of 1989.

| No. | Stock | Sales | High | Low | Close | Net | Change |
|-----|---------------|------------|--------|--------|--------|-----|--------|
| 12) | NY Times A | 35,870,600 | 34 3/4 | 24 1/2 | 26 1/2 | off | 3/8 |
| 13) | Home Shopping | 35,098,900 | 7 5/8 | 3 | 7 1/4 | up | 2 3/4 |
| 14) | ATARI CORP ** | 34,492,500 | 13 3/4 | 4 3/4 | 8 5/8 | up | 3 |
| 15) | Wstn Digital | 34,111,500 | 15 1/4 | 5 3/4 | 8 3/8 | off | 6 3/8 |

MINISCRIBE FILES BANKRUPTCY:

MiniScribe, a Disk Drive manufacturer filed a federal bankruptcy petition on January 2. Miniscribe has taken this step because of a number of investor lawsuits it now faces. In September 1989, a report stated that former managers committed massive fraud over a three year period. Miniscribe will be phasing out it's US manufactured products by the end of the first quarter of 1990.

WORDPERFECT 24 HOUR SUPPORT:

WordPerfect recently announced that it will provide customer support around the clock. The company now has a staff available for customers who need help after normal work hours. About one-third of WPCorp's work force is assigned to customer support duties. Customers who need technical help after regular business hours may call the special support line at (801) 226-6444.

* CORDLESS MOUSE FROM PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

-----> A HARDWARE REVIEW

by John Nagy

I LOVE IT! The wireless mouse, tailless mouse, cordless mouse, what ever you call it, it really works GREAT! I don't normally get this worked up over as mundane an item as a replacement mouse for the ST, but the new unit from Practical Solutions is truly a delight.

Imagine a sleeker, more rounded mouse with half the height of the Atari mouse... and then cut the cord. The PS Cordless Mouse handles better and faster than the Atari mouse, with the added weight of a pair of penlight batteries giving it a great tactile velocity. The buttons are crisper than the Atari, making the "double click" a different experience that will take a few hours for most users to totally get used to.

Another button is on the side of the unit, right where right-handed users will find their thumb when moving the mouse. This is the ON button. Press it, and the mouse will be "live" for about 7 minutes AFTER the last movement you make. That lets it shut itself off when you stop using it, to conserve the batteries. Normal life of the 2 AAA cells should be about a month.

The mouse uses infra-red pulses, just like most tv remote control units. The receiver is a little pod with a red eye that can mount anywhere it can "see" the mouse. Orientation is not important... mount it with a supplied stickum pad on the side of your monitor, under the monitor shelf (upside down or on its side is fine), or anywhere convenient. The mouse is reliable and very direction-independent in operation at up to 5 feet. Although it works even from 12 feet back, you will have to deal with aiming the mouse at the eye (and squinting at the screen!)

Frankly, at \$129 retail, I didn't expect to be able to recommend this mouse... I couldn't figure the cord had ever been THAT much of a hassle. And maybe it wasn't, but I don't want to find out by going back to the old one! Best yet, I have occasionally seen the unit at around \$90 from some dealers. At those prices, a regular mouse (around \$45) can't compare.

Mark Sloatman of Practical Solutions says sales of the ST version of the mouse have been great, surpassing their expectations. Versions are also available at similar prices for the MACINTOSH and AMIGA. It's exactly the right choice for the computerist who has everything. Well, not EVERYTHING, because if you have too much clutter, you might lose the mouse! Owners of cordless phones who have had to have someone call them in order to find the misplaced phone will sympathise.

Practical Solutions, 1135 N. Jones Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85716, (602)
322-6100.

* REVOLUTIONARY CALENDER

-----> WEEKS 1 and 2

by Donald Thomas

WEEK 1

PRIOR TO AND INCLUDING January 6, 1990

LET'S GET THE SHOW ON THE ROAD!

Write a letter, once a week each to the following three individuals:

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| SAM TRAMIEL, President | PRODUCER |
| Atari Corporation | 20/20, ABC TV |
| 1196 Borregas Ave | 1330 Avenue Of The Americas |
| Sunnyvale, CA 94086 | New York, NY 10019 |

The Editor's desk of your local newspaper.

Tell Sam Tramiel that you have joined "The REVOLUTION" and are prepared to wage the war in favor of better consumer exposure of the Atari computer lines. Ask for his recognition and support. This will leave no doubt in Atari's mind that the campaign has substance and they better be building a few more computers next year for the U.S.

Tell 20/20 and your local paper, in your own words, that you have joined "The REVOLUTION"; a consumer interest movement organized to build public awareness about the best available computer values. Tell them the organization has chosen Atari as a well rounded computer which is easily adapted for education, business, music and leisure. As an active member, tell them you request their coverage of the campaign. This activity will be a major step to alert the media that they need to be aware that something is going on.

WEEK 2

January 7 through January 13, 1990

NATIONAL ATARI PUBLICATION RECOGNITION WEEK

During this week, choose one or more Atari orientated publications. There are many. Artisan Software can provide you with addresses or phone numbers of your favorite publication if you wish. When subscribing, include "My subscription is in the spirit of 'The REVOLUTION'!" on your order.

Also during this week, choose a topic concerning "The REVOLUTION" and write a minimum of two paragraphs about your opinions of it. Send it to the editor of your chosen publication.

* PUBLIC DOMAIN UPDATE

-----> BLITZ FIX OFFERED

Editors Note: The following was extracted from the pd file BLITZFIX,
currently available on GENie and CompuServe for downloading.

BLITZFIX for the Atari ST rev - 12/30/89

BLITZFIX turns off the drive connected to the BLITZ copy cable. Useful
after powering up computer.

Copyright (C) 1989 by Wayne S. Arczynski All rights reserved

I was getting annoyed at the fact that every time I reset my computer,
my disk drive connected to the BLITZ copier cable would turn on. So, I
wrote BLITZFIX.

Place BLITZFIX in your AUTO folder and when you turn on your computer
(or press reset). BLITZFIX will turn off the disk connected to your
BLITZ cable.

This software is copyrighted and may NOT BE SOLD. You may distribute
it FREELY as long as both files (BLITZFIX.PRG & BLITZFIX.TXT) are kept
together.

This software is free, but copyrighted. You may use it, you can give it
away (only in its original form), and you can alter it for your own,
personal use. You may not sell it. You may not distribute altered
copies.

If you would like a copy of the source code, send \$5 and a blank disk
to the address below. If you prefer, send \$10 and I'll provide the
disk. For your money you will receive the following software:

- o BLITZFIX.S 68000 source
- o BLITZFIX.PRG Latest Rev.
- o BLITZFIX.TXT This File

You will also receive:

- o BLITZFX2.S 68000 source to NON-STOP version
- o BLITZFX2.PRG Latest Rev. of NON-STOP version

The NON-STOP does not wait for a key press to exit to GEM. The source
code and NON-STOP version of BLITZFIX are available only through this
offer.

Send your order to:

Wayne S. Arczynski
8646 Chelsea Bridge Way
Lutherville, MD 21093

Send comments or suggestions: GENie: WAYNE.A

' 1989 Wayne S. Arczynski, All rights reserved

* NEW LIFE FOR YOUR MOUSE

-----> MOUSE FIX

by Mike Bryant

Is your mouse getting old? Do you often embarrass yourself when you try to show someone how wonderfully easy it is to run a program from the desktop, only to find yourself double-clicking five or six times to get it to run? After months of such frustrations, I was even beginning to have visions of shelling out fifty dollars for a new mouse some day soon. The buttons simply didn't have that quick response that they had when the mouse was new.

Fortunately, I overheard someone at a recent SBACE (South Bay Atari Computer Enthusiasts) meeting mention having fixing a mouse with a similar problem by disassembling it and filing a bit from a plastic tab. I decided to give it a try and found it to be ridiculously easy. Best of all, after about five minutes of effort I now have a mouse that clicks like new! I had forgotten just HOW quick and easy a double-click can be.

When you press a mouse button, the actual switch that is activated is in the bottom of the mouse. A long plastic post is attached to the underside of the button and presses the switch when the button is pressed. Over time (years), this button wears very slightly and simply doesn't reach the switch like it should.

What I discovered on my mouse was that a small plastic tab, visible from the outside of the mouse, was the thing stopping the button from being depressed further to compensate for the worn post. If your mouse buttons are getting unresponsive, take a look at the tab just above the cord as you press the mouse button. If the button strikes the tab before it hits the rest of the mouse case, you can probably fix it with this easy procedure.

Open the mouse case by removing the two screws on the bottom of the case. Also remove the two small screws on the underside of the mouse top cover, in the strip of black plastic covering the button hinges. Remove the black strip and then remove the two buttons from the mouse cover. Either file or shave the plastic tab on the mouse cover by a small amount. Don't worry, you really can't shave too much off. That's all there is to it! Reassemble the mouse, and, if you're as lucky as I was, it will work like new again.

* LINE NOISE

-----> Z*NET BBS TID-BITS

Message : 59 [Open] 12-23-89 12:33pm
From : Ben Hamilton
To : Ron Kovacs (x)
Subject : BBS
Sig(s) : 10 (Z*Net Online Issues)

Ron,

I just downloaded the latest ST*ZMagazine, and I saw the BBS listings near the end. I just wanted you to know that I've been making the mag available on my BBS since issue 49, and I get very positive reader

response to it. Please include my number in your future listings...

The Gate BBS, Copperas Cove, Texas

Node 1: (817) 547-1734

Node 2: (817) 547-1739

Using MichTron BBS v3.0, at 300/1200/2400 bps on both nodes.

Message : 83 [Open] 12-28-89 1:40am

From : Sean Sudol

To : Sysop

Subject : BBS list

Sig(s) : 1 (General)

Hi, I was trying to enter a new BBS listing but wasn't able to. I'm the sysop for Off The Wall BBS in Barrie Ontario, Canada (north of Toronto) the number is (705)734-0349 max. 2400 baud. I'd appreciate you adding it.

Message : 89 [Open] 12-28-89 11:08pm

From : Terry Schreiber

To : All

Subject : User group magazines

Sig(s) : 8 (Public Service Announcements)

PUGET SOUND ATARI NEWS

The Puget Sound Atari News is a publication put together from various user groups both in the United States and Canada. This monthly publication has been in existence for over eight years and still growing. We are currently looking for other Atari user groups to join in the publication. If your user group does not currently publish a newsletter, or there is not a club currently in your area that is part of P.S.A.N. we would like to hear from you.

The magazine covers all aspects of Atari products and third party developers. All reviews written are by Atari users like yourself in plain and simple english for even the most un-experienced computerist. You need not be an English major to write an article.

The cost factor of a monthly newsletter is the main reason most clubs shy away, topics and input are another. P.S.A.N. currently consists of over fifteen clubs, each providing monthly input. You get billed only for the amount of issues that you order, and you order what you know will be sold. Advertising costs offset the price of the newsletter bringing it down to a cost effective alternative for everyone.

In addition P.S.A.N. also carries Z-NET, produced by the same people that bring you ZNET ONLINE, the online magazine. This, six to ten page section, keeps users abreast of what is happening nationally, who's who! and who isn't anymore. The newest product releases, software and hardware updates, and what is in store for the future.

We look forward to hearing from you in the near future and seeing your club name in print. Retailers, who also may wish to purchase copies are invited to enquire.

In the U.S.

Jim Chapman (206) 566-1703
c/o S.P.A.C.E.
P.O. Box 110576
Tacoma Washington
98411-0576

In Canada:

Terry Schreiber (604) 275-7944
c/o T.R.A.C.E.
8611 Cantley Rd.
Richmond B.C.
V7C 3S2

Message : 113 [Open] 12-30-89 4:32pm
From : Grady Johnson
To : All
Subject : BBS
Sig(s) : 1 (General)

Fantasy-Island-BBS
Atari St support/67 meg storage, 7 message bases
u/l-d/l facilities for ST/ST Midi/GIF pics
300/600/1200/2400 baud, open 24 hours/7 days/every week!
Oregon, Ohio

~=> 419-691-6459 <*=~

Message : 124 [Open] 12-31-89 10:13pm
From : Robert Ford
To : Tony Brandao
Subject : #116 PC Ditto 2 vs. PC-Speed
Sig(s) : 1 (General)

Tony,

The "box" that you were speaking of from Talon Technologies was written up in the January 1990 issue of STart. For those interested it is basically an 8 MHz 512K IBM XT in a box that plugs into your DMA port. If you use a hard drive just plug the Supercharger, that is it's name, into the hard drives thru port, that's all.

The Supercharger has 512K of RAM and when used, that is the memory that is used in IBM emulation. Your ST's memory is NOT used. Let me make this less wordy and just give a list of features.

1. Processor: NEC 8-MHZ V30 (same as PC Ditto II and PC Speed)
2. Socket for 8087 math coprocessor.
3. Autoboot off any partition.
4. CGA support: 320x200 with four colors. (Color monitor)
640x200 with two colors. (Color or mono monitor)
5. Hot key to switch between ST and IBM mode. When emulation program is run again you will be right where you left off!
6. Future updates:
 - a. VGA card.
 - b. Expansion box to allow use of IBM cards.

SuperCharger
Talon Technologies

243 N. Hwy. 101, #11
Solano Beach, CA 92075
Retail: \$399

the CyberPunk

I'm Proud to Support the REVOLUTION!!!

Message : 126 [Open] 12-31-89 11:46pm
From : Trac-rat
To : Richard Guadagno
Subject : #120 PC DItto 2 vs. PC-Speed
Sig(s) : 1 (General)

ST World (UK) had a great article on the PC emulators...they compared PC-Speed and SuperCharger...SuperChargers the new PC emulator from Europe that plugs into the DMA port...It has it's own memory and processor Built in... It does have problems with hard drives both supra and ICD, but the ICD can be used, they do have a patch. SuperCharger is the only PC emulator out that lets you use your Atari mouse (with no problems). PC-Speed has a problem with the Atari mouse, they want you to use an IBM Serial mouse that you'd hook up to your modem port. SuperCharger turns your Mouse port into a serial port, so you can't use a Modem with either. Since they're both the same price, I think that SuperCharger is a little better of a buy.

Say "Cheese" The Trac-Rat

Editors Note: Call the ZNET ONLINE BBS (201) 968-8148 and list your BBS today. If you have news you think we should cover or interesting tidbits about software or new releases, simply leave a message and it will appear here!

* HARDWARE REVIEW

-----> SPECTRE GCR REVISITED

by Kristofer H. Cruz

(Reprinted from the Puget Sound
Atari News, December 1989)

Gadgets By Small Inc.
40 W. Littleton Blvd #210-211
Littleton, Colorado 80120
(303) 791-6098

After more than three months of waiting, I finally received my Spectre GCR. I was not sure how many more delays I would have to endure. At times I wondered if I would ever see GCR or my money ever again. My friends and I made bets on which would arrive first GCR or PC Ditto (I won). Lots of money was collected and Dave Small was showing working Spectre's all over this country and several others.

It seemed as if fate had cursed Small. The original Spectre did not have packaging due to a particular unscrupulous local packager in Dave's base of operations: Littleton, Colorado. Then, the GCR was delayed because a Taiwanese worker gets his hand caught in one of the molds for

the plastic cases. (If you were interested, he is well on his way to recovery and should be able to return to work soon... to paraphrase the GCR manual.) Perhaps Dave Small should put in the orders for packaging now for any future products - then when they are ready, these items can be shipped immediately. However, for those who did not get on the waiting list to be the "first" on the block to get GCR, they are now shipping, although they are heavily back-ordered. So if you wondered just what all the noise was about, then read on.

I began my trek, a few years back with a designer paper bag and a little rabbit in the hat fittingly dubbed the Magic Sac. This device made your Atari into a Macintosh, a feat that was thought impossible. I still remember a quote from Mac User magazine "Until Apple gives it the green light, it won't see the light of day.". Of course Mac dealers would laugh, saying that it was impossible for an "Atari" (as if it meant Plague) to run Macintosh software. These are the guys who would tell you that the blank unformatted 3.5 " disks they sold would only work in "their" machine. I knew better. I ran 3.5" drives off my 800XL for at least 2 years. Even though I was pleased with the Magic Sac, there were little annoyances - transferring the disks to a special format, etc... Some programs would not run at all. They were for the newer 128K machines.

Then low and behold, the same creator of the Magic Sac, made a new device and called it Spectre. The name Magic Sac had been copyrighted and the business end of the now divorced enterprise was awarded the holder of the copyright. To name the new Mac emulator, Small went searching through a thesaurus and came up with the name Spectre, the "reincarnation of Magic Sac". As if a phoenix rising from the ashes, the new emulator swept the Atari world by storm. So, of course you knew I just had to have one. I was, of course, the first person in town to get the Spectre . It eliminated the need for a beastie know as Hard Disk 20 (Apple's version of the 40 folder limit for the Macintosh). It also added HFS which meant disks now would store 800k. There was limited screen dump support for the Atari laser printer and a host of other neat new features. But it still did not read Mac format disks... until now.

Before I get to the nitty gritty, let me tell you a little bit about myself (I am sure you are dying to know, right?). When I first got my Magic Sac, it was 1987 and I was then employed as a computer maintenance technician with the USAF in California. I had just recently bought a 1040ST with monochrome monitor. Upon seeing a friend's Magic Sac, I was truly impressed. I ordered one. My friend, Marie Foster (the world's friend), set me up with everything I needed. I was happy with the Magic Sac and kept it when I left the Air Force in 1988, to move to Spokane, Washington and attend college while freeloadng off my parents (What can I say?). So I now an attending Eastern Washington University up here in Washington (the state). My first post Air Force job was in a print shop typesetting on a Macintosh. Then, the university was kind enough to allow me to work part time in their computer labs as a consultant. They have three lab areas where I work - Mac, IBM and VAX. Can you guess where I work most? You got it, the Mac lab. I can truly say this is a position I absolutely enjoy. I supervise a network of 10 Mac Plus's and a server system, with 40MB hard drive, laserwriter plus and 530 MB CD ROM of PD software. My position requires me to be versed in several Mac applications in order to answer questions and assist users with their needs. I have also been learning to program Mac-style in Turbo PASCAL. Could you see why a person might want the ability to use native Mac format disks with Spectre? I ordered the GCR as soon as

Dave was taking advance orders. I found out about this through his newsletter which registered owners receive about every three months. After about three months of waiting, the GCR finally arrived in late October. I was elated.

The Review

And so now here it is, what you have been waiting for, an in depth review of the Spectre GCR. It comes in a plastic molded carrier with purple lettering and the Gadgets Logo on the front. The case is gray, measuring about 4.5 X 3.5 inches and about 1.5 inches deep. The manual is a full size 8" X 10" shrink wrapped bundle similar to those for clones. But don't look for the binder, there isn't one. Content-wise, it is a combination of the old Spectre manual with GCR specific stuff and some fables included as well.

The cartridge unit comes with the shells apart, so you can put in the 128K ROMS (buy REAL Apple ROMS and stay out of jail) without much fuss. The PC board is a high quality silk screened job, with gold fingers on the cartridge connector. Two floppy ports, like the one on your ST, are in the back of the cartridge. To attach the GCR unit, you plug it into the computer and run a cable (included) to the ST drive port of your computer. It will also support external drives in addition to the internal one found on the ST.

Two disks come with the GCR. The first is a regular ST disk with Spectre and Transverter as well as a host of other programs. There is even a program to launch the Spectre GCR from bootup. The second disk is an actual Mac disk in the GCR format. Briefly, GCR is how the Mac does disks, it is nonstandard and no one else's drive can read them - Apple made sure of that.

This second disk contains many PD utilities you may already have in Spectre format. But this disk also serves as a test of the ability to read native Mac disks. And that was exactly what I did first (after reading the manual, of course).

All went well. The Spectre came up in Mac mode and read the PD disk. Then I tried "my" Mac disks. Chunk, chunk, up pops the disk on the desktop. Then I proceeded to try every native Mac disk I had (including my Pagemaker program, which set me back \$600 and was worth every penny). None of them failed to read properly, so I decided to give it a test from Spectre to Mac.

I took ten disks and formatted them on the GCR. I then took them to the Mac lab and proceeded to read and write two files from these disks on each of ten individual Macintosh's as well as their accompanying external drives. None of them had any problems, and as far as the Macs knew, they were real Macintosh disks. They did not care if these disks came from an Atari or a Mac. Now if only the Mac guys saw it this way. So if you add it up, I read 40 files and wrote 40 files using disks that had been formatted on the GCR. None failed. Then I took these disks home to read them using GCR. All went fine, no problems.

I have been using the GCR since the middle of October and have yet to have any troubles. However, let me state that it is not such a story when using another persons computer. I did a demo of the GCR at a friend's house on her 1040 and on another friend's Mega. The GCR seemed more sensitive to crashes on these other machines. This, I suspect, was due to excessive RF on both systems, because I have my monitors well

away from my GCR. This is explained in the manual that comes with the GCR. This is not to say the GCR failed on other systems, just that when it crashed I found the hard drive partitions nearly impossible to recover until I brought my hard drive and GCR home to my computer. I could, of course, have tweaked an adjustment, but I was just doing a demo and did not want to have to do that again when I got home. I was able to recover when I got home, and I must say I have never lost a partition from Spectre or Spectre GCR. The last ditch measures have always been successful. I suspect this is a better average than Small himself has had with Spectre according to his writings.

In Addition..

Even though the main advantage to the GCR is the ability to use real Mac disks, and of course, existing Spectre format and Magic disks, there are more perks included.

One major one is improved software compatibility. Among the biggies that now run are Microsoft Word 4.0 and Filemaker. There are still games that will not run, but the ST does have many superior games, so this isn't a big deal.

The digitized sound is now done in a more elegant manner. It will automatically switch the sound on and off. You can select which SCSI ID your laser will be at: 7 or 5 (The new ones are address 5). The Viking monitor is supposed to be supported, but when I tried this on a friend's, it failed. I asked Small why this was so, and he told me that he was apparently sent the developers version of the driver for the monitor, and everyone else got a different one. The next version of the software will remedy this.

Laser printing is now available in up to 144 DPI, but not direct Postscript to the SLM804. Chooser works without crashing, so you don't need that specially configured system file in order to choose the laserwriter without crashing. The right mouse button now acts as the shift key, which makes things easier.

A 320K floppy disk cache will speed up operations for those with memory to burn. MFS and HFS floppies can be formatted from the ST side. And now you can even format GCR type disks directly from the Mac desktop, the same way the real Mac does. Smart floppy copy algorithms mean less disk swapping. If you have enough memory to hold an entire disk, then you only put it in once.

There is a slug of keyboard commands to set the particulars, such as screen dumps, disk mount/unmount, printer interceptor, and a key to kick out incomplete pages from the laser printer.

Caveats

There are a few not so great things about GCR too. If I did not mention them, then I would not be doing an honest evaluation.

First, some Mega 2 computers have some weak chips in them that affect the operation of the Spectre. There are four of them and they are inexpensive logic chips. It is just that Atari used weak version instead of a more robust version. You will need to either fix this yourself or have a dealer do it for you.

Second gripe is that the Viking monitor does not work in this version.

Dave did promise me that the next version of the software would fix this.

The Spectre software overrides any custom finder icons you have made. I had little beer mugs in mine until I ran Spectre. Now they look like bricks. This does have an advantage though. It allows the Spectre to put a computer symbol in the icon for a GCR disk or a Gadgets Logo for a Spectre format disk. This allows you to tell which is which.

My final gripe is that there is no accompanying binder for the manual. I would have liked one with the Gadgets logo in matching purple letters like the carrier. Dave can remedy this by producing one and, if necessary, sell it (reasonably priced, I hope) to those who want one.

Summary

The Spectre GCR is the culmination of 4 years of research and development in state of the art Macintosh emulation. As with anything, Spectre GCR is not perfect, it crashes sometimes. But then so does a REAL LIVE MAC. As of this writing, the Spectre GCR IS state-of-the-art. No other company offers a product that even comes close.

This device offers you the ability to run approximately 90% of all Mac software designed for the Mac SE and down. It also lets you exchange data with real Macs as easily as removing a disk and inserting it again. Screen operations are an average of 20% faster than a real Mac.

The \$300 price may seem high at first. But considering that you get a Mac Plus and a Mac to IBM disk converter, you actually save about \$1200 over a comparable Apple setup. The savings get better when compared to the price of the portable mac. In the end there is no other choice. For serious users, Spectre GCR is the only way to go!

Sources for 128K ROMS

Pre-Owned Electronics
30 Clematis Avenue
Waltham, Massachusetts 02154
(800) 274-5343

Shreve Systems
2421 Malcom Street
Shreveport, Louisiana 71108

* SHAREWARE SPOTLITE

-----> CODEHEAD SOFTWARE

by Kenn Johnson

The Auto Folder, Reprinted from:
The Puget Sound Atari News
December 1989

I was recently reformatting my hard drive and when reloading my AUTO folder I noticed something significant. Four of the eight programs are from the same authors. That's significant because I only use a program if:

- A) It helps make my computing life easier and,
- B) It has to be well behaved; i.e., it doesn't cause problems with other programs I use (actually an extension of A).

Each of these programs fit that criteria. This is the list of the eight programs:

PINHEAD.PRG
FOLDER100.PRG
DESKMGR2.PRG
RESTART.PRG
UIS_II.PRG
G+PLUS.PRG
MACCEL2.PRG
HOTWIRE.PRG

Some of you will recognize that I am talking about the CodeHeads, Charles F. Johnson and John Eidsvoog. Some of these are shareware (PINHEAD14.PRG & DESKMGR2.PRG) and the others are commercial products (G+PLUS & HOTWIRE).

PINHEAD: This shareware program has to be experienced to be believed. Boot time (the time it takes from turning on or resetting your computer to the desktop display) is reduced. How much depends on the amount of memory you have, the programs in the auto folder, and most important the version of TOS your computer has. A reduction of half can easily be expected. It utilizes a .DAT file for those programs that require a little more working room or turn it off if they just won't work with PINHEAD. The DOC file included explains it all.

DESKMANAGER: This program introduced me to Charles Johnson (pre CodeHead) and has been (is) a great asset. It allows the selection of AUTO programs and ACCESSORIES that you want to run on bootup. It also allows multiple DESKTOP.INF files for those with two monitors. If one of the AUTO programs is GDOS.PRG it will also allow selecting different ASSIGN.SYS files for different GDOS using programs. Anyone who uses multiple GDOS programs (EASYDRAW, TOUCHUP, PUBLISH ST, WRITE, etc.) will note the benefit here. DESKMGR26.PRG is the latest shareware version.

G+PLUS: If you use GDOS based programs and don't know about G+PLUS (the + is silent), then you are in for a surprise. A total replacement for GDOS (take GDOS and toss it), it solves most of the problems inherent with GDOS (system slowdown, difficulty in changing ASSIGN.SYS files, etc.) and adds some nifty enhancements. You can run any GDOS based program simply by clicking on it. G+PLUS will read its install file (the program will do this for you also) and load the necessary ASSIGN.SYS file for that program. Want to go to another, just click and run. NO MORE REBOOTING! Another feature of G+PLUS is an accessory that comes with the package and speeds up screen redraws significantly. This program is so hassle free that I boot up with it most of the time and don't even realize it's there. Try that with GDOS, friend!

HOTWIRE: The first time I used this program it took me several tries to figure out why my system looked different. I would quit from a program and POP I'm back on the desktop. It finally dawned on me, NO MORE OPEN WINDOWS!!! Anyway, HOTWIRE is simply a program that replaces all the mouse clicks and folder searching with a hot key. Press an assigned key combination and presto the program runs.

Other CodeHead commercial products I use outside of the Auto folder

include MULTIDESK and the CodeHead UTILITIES.

MULTIDESK: allows you to have more than 6 accessories installed at one time. In fact, installing it into itself will allow you to use up all your memory just with accessories. A nifty feature is that you can also use MULTIDESK as a program. This is the way I use it (through HOTWIRE) so I only have an accessory loaded when I need it, not wasting valuable memory.

If you have a lot of programs that run from your AUTO folder then you've probably come across programs that will only work if they are run before others. This becomes a hassle trying to get the combination correct. On the UTILITIES disk is a slick program that makes life much easier. Run AUTO_ORGANIZER and select the order you want and quit. Life should be so simple.

All of these programs have more features. I didn't try to review them completely, just bring them before you and hope you will try some of them. If you use one of the shareware programs send in the fee for registration. These guys are only getting better, so to keep them programming, 'ya gotta keep em happy'.

* SOFTWARE REVIEW

-----> C BREEZE

by Sally Nagy

C-Breeze with its extentions help C programmers edit C source code more efficiently. It can be configured to be used with any language or used as a general purpose ASCII editor. C-Breeze is compatible all major C Compilers. Configuration macros are supplied to work with Mark Williams C, Megamax C (Laser C), Lattice C and Hi-Tech C compilers. Within C-Breeze a programmer can edit, debug, compile, link and run his C programs without leaving it. Customize menu and keyboard commands to suit your preferences.

C-Breeze offers the programmer many installation possibilities. It can be used with floppies, RAM disks or Hard drive. Its different configuration files can be in different directories so tailoring C-Breeze to meet specific project needs becomes possible.

C-Breeze uses the standard GEM interface but allows for six active windows with documents instead of the usual four. The programmer can customize his own menu which acts as a shell for compiling, linking and debugging for his particular C system. Install C-Breeze as an application lets one automatically load the program when a '*.C' file is double clicked. All commands are accessed either by the menu or keyboard short cuts.

C-Breeze can be reconfigured to behave like any other editor with the Calligrapher and Emacs emulations. The manual states that the basic advantages for using these emulations are that they alleviate the need to learn C-Breeze's new command key strokes and reduce the confusion of constantly moving between different command sets of editors and word processors.

C-Breeze offers advanced C Source Code Editing. Several macros included

in its standard configuration automate entry of standard C source text.

C-Breeze has all the features found in other editors and more. It remembers all deletes and offers an Undo last delete facility. Keystrokes that are repetitive can be captured and replayed. C-Breeze has commands which allow jumping directly to a named function, marking functions, next/previous function jumping, auto indentation and brace/comment insertion, and showing balance of brackets. The current date and time can be inserted directly into the text. Output to the printer is dated, numbered, paged and titled.

Under C-Breeze's Help menu option one obtains help in the following areas: general help, keyboard commands help, menu commands, and mouse control. Its' online manuals provide a C quick reference. Quickly find an ASCII Table with the ST character set and control characters and crash analysis which contains some reasons why programs bomb, along with BIOS and GEMDOS error return codes. Manuals contain information on Standard C Strings, Math, Files and Miscellany. These provide help in remembering operator precedence, keywords, character constants, and complex declarations.

C-Breeze's Manual leaves the user searching. Pages are not numbered consecutively between sections. Each sub topic is a world unto itself. Installation, for instance, has 34 pages. The next chapter starts over again at page 1. When you get to the index, you have a page listing like 4-21 so you have to remember that the Reference Guide is chapter 4. Lots of fun, huh? This disappointing manual is unexpected. MichTron's manuals are usually excellent. I hope they plan to improve it in later printings. I really do like its plastic ring binding.

C programmers who aren't pleased with their compiler's text editor can really benefit using C-Breeze, especially if it's an older compiler. Some may find C-Breeze does not offer them enough. Please remember that MichTron also offers Tempus II.

C-Breeze sells for \$49.95 and is available from
MichTron
576 S. Telegraph
Pontiac, MI 48053
(313)334-5700

```
=====
Z*Net Online is a weekly online magazine covering the Atari
community. Opinions and commentary presented are those of the
individual authors and do not reflect those of Rovac Industries.
ZNET and ZNET ONLINE are copyright 1989, 1990 by Rovac Industries.
Reprint permission is granted as long as ZNET ONLINE is credited and
the article is not edited without permission.                =/=
=====
ZNET ONLINE Volume 5 Number 1                                Atari News and Reviews FIRST!
Copyright (c)1990 Rovac Industries, Inc..
=====
```